

E

449

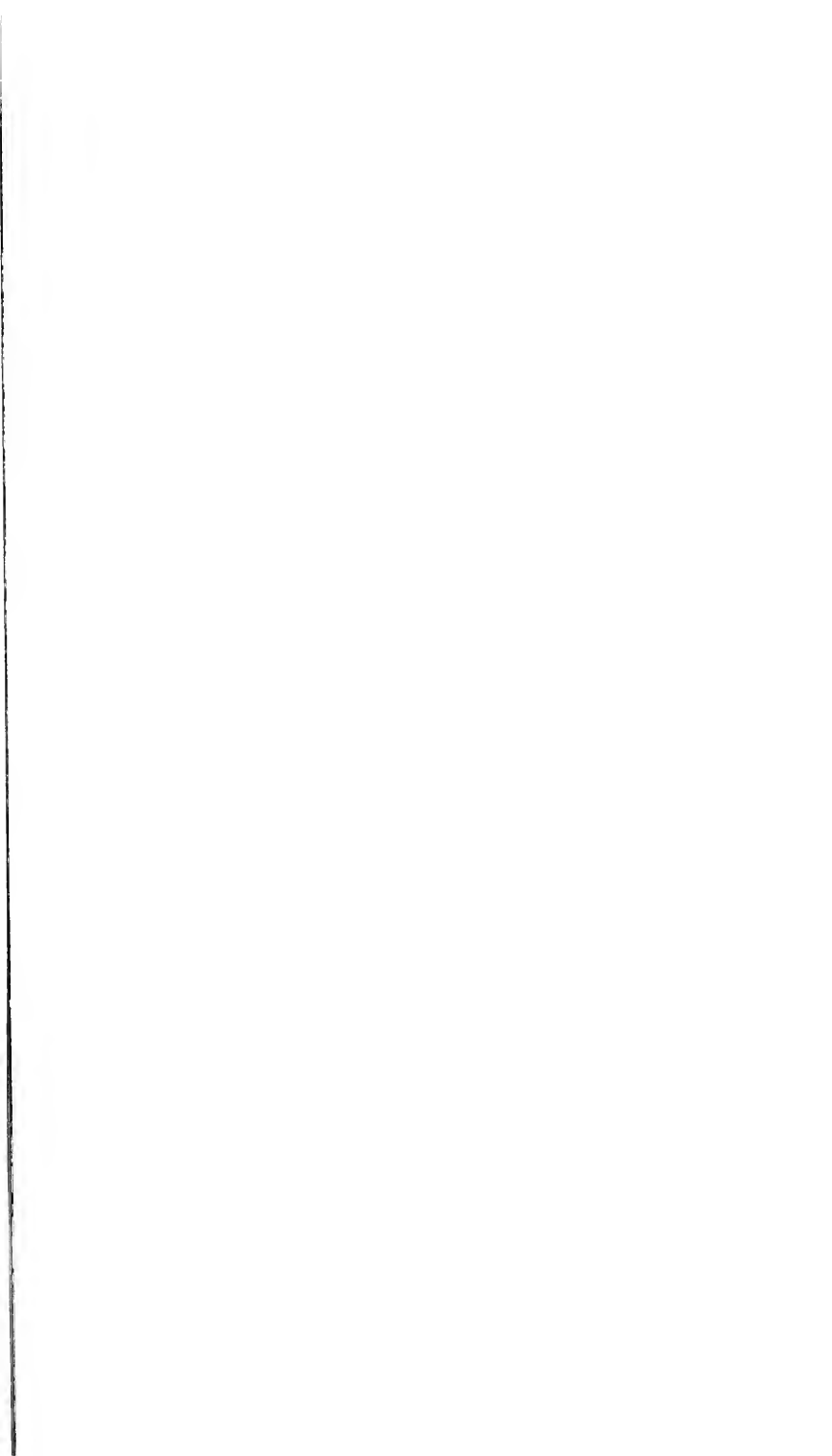
.C447

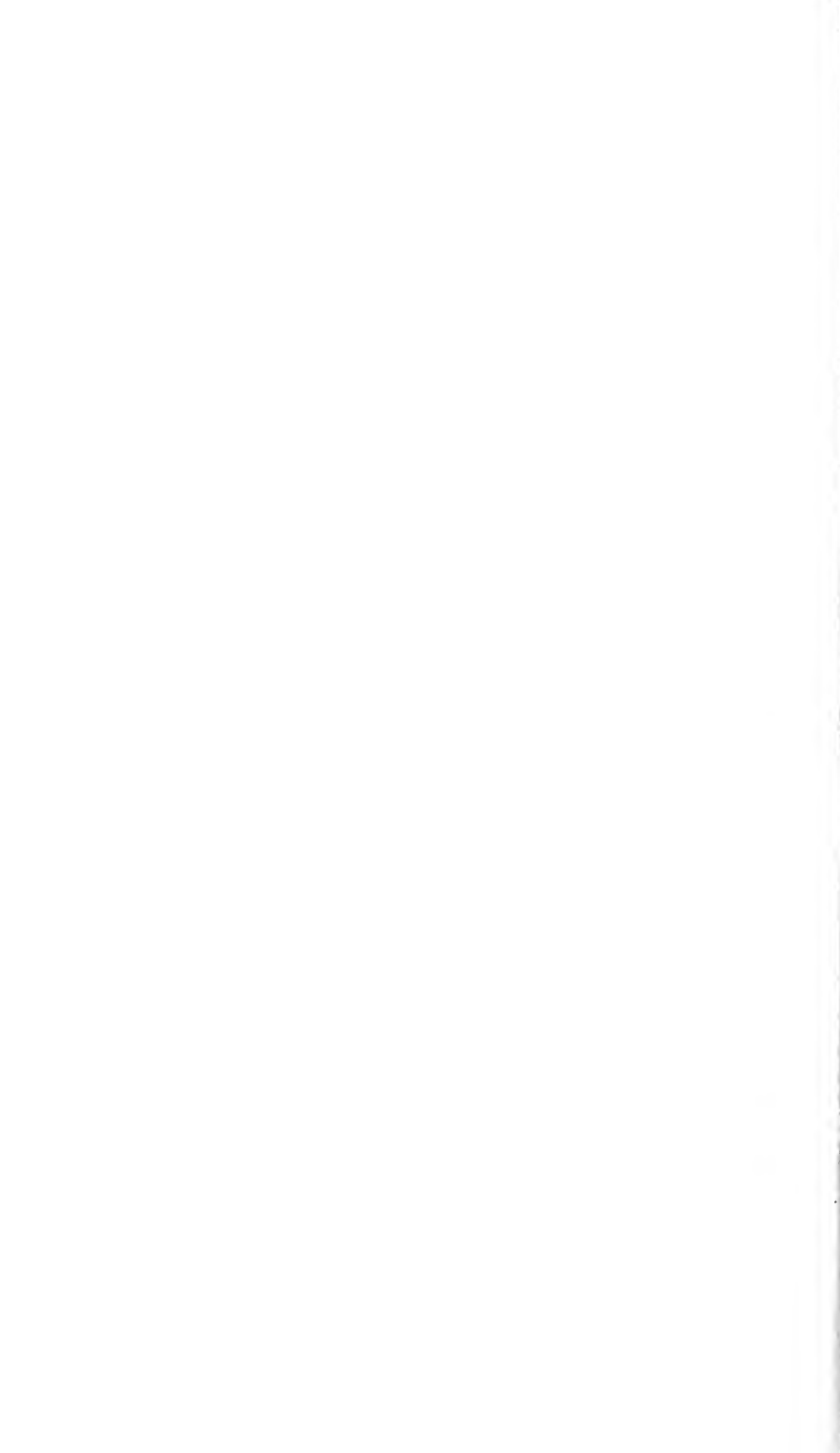


Class E 449

Book C 447







*H. K. M. Welch Esq.
Hartford. 6-1-52*

THE

CONFEDERACY

OF

JUDAH WITH ASSYRIA:

A SERMON PREACHED IN THE

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,

West Brattleboro, Vt., July 4th, 1852.

BY JOSEPH CHANDLER,
PASTOR OF THE CHURCH.

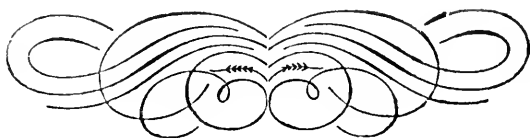
"I believed, and therefore have I spoken."

J. B. Miner, Printer.

Handwritten text at the top of the page, possibly a date or reference number, including "1943" and "10/10/43".

E 449
C 447

208496



WEST BRATTLEBORO, Sept. 20, 1852.

REV. J. CHANDLER,

Dear Sir:—We the Subscribers respectfully solicit for the press, a copy of the Sermon which you delivered on the Fourth of July last.

RUSSELL HAYES,	H. F. SMITH,
DAN'L WARRINER,	JOHN LISCOM,
OSHEA SMITH,	WM. GAINS,
EDW'D CROSBY,	EDW'D DUNKLEE,
S. G. SMITH,	TIMOTHY ADKINS,
ABNER ADAMS,	JONATHAN HORTON,
FRANCIS D. WHEELER,	WILLARD ARMS, JR.,
THO'S CROSBY,	SOLYMAN CUNE.

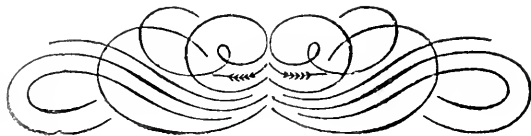
GENTLEMEN:—I herewith transmit a copy of the discourse you request for publication. I have endeavored, by revising and enlarging it somewhat, to make it less unworthy to appear before the public. The importunity of friends is a worn-out apology for publication. Be assured that no such importunity in this instance would have prevailed with me, had you not persuaded me that the publication might aid in the dissemination of views and principles which we hold to be important, and of great present interest.

Your friend and pastor,

JOSEPH CHANDLER.

To Messrs. R. HAYES, D. WARRINER, and others.

West Brattleboro, Sept. 27, 1852.





ISAIAH 5. 11—14. For the Lord spake thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me, that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying,

Say ye not, a confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, a confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid, •

Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.

And he shall be for a sanctuary.

This day being the Anniversary of the Declaration of our National Independence, it is manifestly not improper that we select for discussion some one among the many topics which the civil history of the day suggests, provided only, that we do not forget what is due to the sacredness of the Lord's day and of the pulpit. We are indeed aware that there are not a few who think that subjects of a public, national and political interest should never be broached in the pulpit, and that ministers of the gospel, who presume to preach upon such subjects, neglect their proper duty, and intermeddle with what does not belong to them. Now, we do not doubt that some preachers do thus depart from the simplicity of the gospel, and lay themselves open to just censure, and we are as firmly persuaded that much of the preaching, whether on political or other subjects, which men *applaud*, and which fills their mouths with compliments for the preacher, is "another gospel." But we would ask, does not the prevailing prejudice against the discussion, in the pulpit, of subjects of public and political interest, indicate a wide departure from the principles of the gospel, of those maxims which bear sway in politics and in the conduct of public affairs? Men would not be so unwilling that their political principles and conduct should be examined in the light of Divine truth, were they not conscious, or at least suspicious, that such examination would reveal how corrupt and how far removed from sound morality the whole business of politics is. But again, they who would interdict the clergy from discussing and passing judgment upon public affairs, seem not to be aware how much our national independence owes to the American pulpit. In the year 1774, the General Assembly of Massachusetts Bay sent to the several ministers of the province a circular letter, in which, after acknowledging the goodness of Heaven in constantly supplying them with preachers of the gospel, they say, "In a day like this, when all the friends of civil and religious liberty are exerting themselves to deliver this country from its present calamities, we cannot but place great hopes in an order of men who have ever distinguished themselves in their country's cause, and do therefore recommend to the ministers of the gospel in the several towns and other places in this colony, that they assist us in avoiding that dreadful slavery with which we are now threatened." A distinguished writer of the present day says, "The history of the American pulpit, during the war for national independence, affords an instructive comment on the power of a preached gospel to make men valiant for truth and right, timid in the defense of wrong,

humane to their enemies, faithful to their friends, obedient to the powers that are ordained of God, but resolute in resisting all such encroachments as are contrary to the will of Heaven. The opposers of our Revolution ascribed it in no small degree to the character of the religion of our fathers, a religion which gave great prominence to the pulpit, which made the clergyman a teacher more than a priest, and the layman an intelligent citizen, rather than a passive subject.'

We hesitate not to say that the pulpit has done more for civil liberty in this country than its entire military and naval establishment has done. The very idea of civil liberty was borrowed from the church. Liberty was born and nurtured, and had her home there, long before she appeared in the state. The puritans asserted and maintained spiritual freedom long before they thought of aiming at a like freedom in temporal things. Their first and main object in colonizing this country was to establish *religious* liberty for themselves and their children, on a permanent basis. Free institutions in the state followed as a matter of course, in the circumstances. But had not religious liberty gone before and laid the foundation, had not the self-government of the puritan churches made men familiar with the idea and the practical workings of free institutions, all the armies and navies in the world could never have established such institutions here. Had not the people of the colonies learned the worth of liberty from their enjoyment of it in the churches, they never would have fought for it as they did: had they not there learned how to use and how to preserve it, the revolution itself would have been worse than fruitless—anarchy, military despotism, or at best a change of masters, its only result. These, in brief, are our reasons for saying that the pulpit has done more than armies and navies for free institutions in this country. On any subject, therefore, which relates to the welfare of these institutions, and to their bearing upon religion and the interests of the church, the pulpit, to which they owe so much, has a right to speak.

The course of thought which we will now pursue, may be gathered from the text. Pekah, king of Israel, and Rezin, king of Syria, had formed an alliance for invading Judea and taking Jerusalem. Thereupon, Ahaz, king of Judah, greatly alarmed for his kingdom, and conceiving himself wholly unable, without assistance, to meet and resist these allied kings, was about forming an alliance with the king of Assyria. While this was pending, and after Pekah and Rezin had made one unsuccessful attempt upon Jerusalem, Isaiah was commissioned of God to deliver the prophecy of which the text is a part. He first assures Ahaz that there was no danger from the quarter whence he apprehended it, and that in a few years both the kings of whom he stood in fear should be removed from their kingdoms. But he then goes on to point out a source of real and overwhelming danger. He foretells an invasion of the land by the king of Assyria,—the very one with whom Ahaz was seeking an alliance,—an invasion, too, which should be most calamitous to the kingdom of Judah. "The Lord shall bring upon thee and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days that have not come from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah; even the king of Assyria. Ahaz paid no regard to these predictions. His mind was still harassed with fears of Pekah and Rezin, and still bent upon an alliance with the king of Assyria. Many of his subjects shared in his fears, and in his desire for this new alliance. To this state of things the text has special reference. "The Lord spake thus to me with a strong hand,"—strongly and almost irresistibly impelling me to speak;—"and instructed

me that I should not walk in the way of this people,"—that I should not fall in with nor countenance the designs and measures of the king and people,—“saying, say ye not, a confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, a confederacy”—have nothing to do with this prevailing demand for an alliance with Assyria, but discountenance and oppose it,—“neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid,”—sympathise not with them in their needless alarm. “Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread,”—worship and honor him, and regard him as your safety and your defence; fear not man, but fear God, and provoke not his displeasure by distrusting and forsaking him, and seeking help from man. “And he shall be for a sanctuary,” an asylum and a place of refuge, where all who take shelter shall be safe from harm.

It is added in the context that the Lord shall be “for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel; for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.”—This prophecy of what might be expected from the course that Ahaz was taking, was strictly fulfilled. Regardless of all warnings, he at length obtained the much desired alliance, and threw himself under the protection of the king of Assyria. “This treaty,” says a historian, “led to the usual results, where a weaker state enters into an alliance with a stronger. The Assyrian lent his aid as far as suited his own views of conquest; but when Ahaz was troubled by the Edomites, he sent no aid, and he exhausted the kingdom of Judah by the exaction of heavy tribute.” Ahaz, in his increasing perplexities, plunged more deeply into idolatry. As recorded in the book of Chronicles, “He sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which smote him; and he said, because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, therefore will I sacrifice unto them, that they may help me. But they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel.”

The text affords an instructive analogy, to which we shall recur as we have occasion.

The constitution of the United States, under which our union was formed, is without doubt the wisest and best political constitution ever devised by man. To it, under God, we are mainly indebted for our unexampled prosperity, our freedom from restrictions of natural rights, from burdensome taxation, and from intestine broils, commotions and revolutions. The increase of the nation in numbers, in wealth, in the means of education, in resources for business, in the useful arts, and in the individual comfort, elevation and refinement of the people, has no parallel in all history.

At different times, indeed, in our history, the constitution, and especially the union of the states under it, has been exposed to danger, from various quarters. The last war with Great Britain, contrary to the will of one-third of the States, the complete triumph of the party that favored over that which opposed it, and the annihilation of the latter, the nullifying doctrines, and acts of one of the southern States, the large accessions made to our territory, and some minor causes, created, each in its turn, serious apprehensions for the safety and integrity of the Union. But while subsequent events have shown that most of these apprehensions were groundless, there is yet one other cause, still in operation, from which more danger has been feared than from any one, and perhaps all the others. It seems to be generally agreed that the great,

and almost the only present danger to the Union, arises directly or indirectly from the institution of Negro slavery.

Certainly, no one subject has caused greater agitation throughout the country for the last few years than this; and hence, as we might expect, there is hardly any subject in respect to which the views of men on both sides are more characterized by extravagance, and distorted by prejudice. The intemperate and fanatical zeal with which the institution has been attacked on the one side and defended on the other, has contributed mainly to this agitation, and indeed, until recently, has constituted the greater part of it. At first, and for a long time, it was confined chiefly to a small class of violent and reckless men, at the North and the South. But within two or three years past, another and better class have become agitated. The minds of many sober men have been filled with the most painful apprehensions for the safety of the Union and the constitution in such a storm, and the cry has gone through the land, "The Union is in danger." The halls of congress witnessed the starting of this alarming cry: it was echoed by politicians, in conventions, and thro' the political press: it was re-echoed in the marts of commerce, and by the commercial press; and even the pulpit lent itself to some extent to spread the alarm in quarters which else it would scarcely have reached.

Now we are ready to admit, without hesitation, that there is ground for alarm. Slavery does very seriously endanger the Union, and will yet put it in far greater danger. No intelligent man can shut his eyes to the fact that slavery is at war with the fundamental principles and the legitimate tendencies of our constitution, and of our American civilization. It has contrived to live in our country, because the constitution suffered it to live: it has even contrived to grow into great power and influence in our government, by that sufferance. But ever, as it has advanced in power, it has developed, more and more, its true character.—Its serpent fangs can no longer be concealed; it is even now preparing to strike its poison into the bosom that has cherished it. On every slight provocation, on every appearance of opposition, it raises its hateful head, and darts its threatening tongue. And the time is not far off, as every observing man must see, when it can no longer be harbored among us,—when an extreme necessity, as in a case of life or death, will demand its removal. As sure as there are such things among men as knowledge, truth, honor, patriotism, philanthropy, morality, religion; as sure as there is a Church of Christ on earth,—as sure as there is a Millenium in prospect, so sure is it that Slavery must and will disappear from this land and from the world. All that is good on earth is arrayed against it; the very stars in their courses fight against it. Whether in its fall it will bring down our republic with it, cannot now be predicted; but the two cannot stand much longer upon the same soil. "Slavery must pass away; or all that brightens and adorns this land with the promise of a new era of freedom for mankind, must perish before it.—The soil of freedom must be cultivated by the hands of freemen, or the time will come, when, from each traditionary hill, and from each sacred battle-field, the voices of the guardian genii will be heard in tones of grief, Let us depart."*

There is danger, then, enough of it, from slavery. We would neither deny, conceal, nor extenuate it. At the same time, we cannot but think that there is in many minds a strange misapprehension of the nature of that danger. A few of the southern states, or rather their rep-

* Dr. Bacon, in Bib. Reper., Jan. 1840.

representatives in congress, have for years been threatening to withdraw from the union. This threat is renewed every time they have a difficult point to carry. And many good people seem to think that the danger is that they will do it. Now, we do humbly conceive that this is not the thing we have most to fear. If slavery would just take itself off quietly, and leave us to enjoy our freedom and our noble constitution, undisturbed by its incessant agitation, it might not be so very bad a thing. But slavery never will do this. It holds too dear all the bulwarks and defences which it has compelled our government, whether under or over the constitution, it mattered little which, to build around it. The utmost ingenuity of the supporters of slavery has been taxed for years, to extort from the constitution interpretations and constructions which we are quite sure its framers never dreamed of, to uphold and strengthen the system. The highest point yet attained in this line of policy is indicated in the act of congress known as the Fugitive Slave Law. Since that law was enacted, its supporters have demanded, with the same insolent pertinacity with which they fought for its enactment, that congress and the national party conventions should declare, by formal resolutions, that they will abide by it, as a final settlement of all the disputed questions, to which it has reference; that they will refrain from all agitation of these questions—that they will never demand its repeal, and that they will see it thoroughly and faithfully executed.—And now, having carried all these points, and gained these advantages, we certainly need be under no further apprehension that the South will throw them all away by withdrawing from the union. No! the danger is not now, if it ever was, that slavery would leave us. The danger is that it will cling to us, like a foul cancerous disease, till it eats away the very heart of the nation.

The measures that have been taken by those who are thought to have saved the union, indicate to our mind very clearly their misapprehension of the case. The enactment of the Fugitive Slave Law was confessedly a sacrifice to propitiate the Moloch of Slavery. The stale and empty threat of some of the southern states, that they would withdraw from the union, wrought, at length, so much upon the fears of our legislators as to compel their consent to that law. Of course, the design was to unite these disaffected states with their slaveholding interests, more closely to the union. After that law had been put in operation, and the sound, conscientious men of the North had begun to learn its character, and to express their honest and righteous indignation at the disgrace of such a law, and their determination to suffer its utmost penalties, rather than aid in enforcing it, at once the proclamation went through the land, "This law must be obeyed,—to refuse obedience is treason, not only to the South, but to the government, and even to God." The solemn sanctions of the Bible were urged by great, and learned, and honored preachers of the gospel, to enforce the duty of obedience to this law. And so it seemed that there was produced thro' the country a very general agreement, or shall we not say, a confederacy, to avert the danger to the union, by sustaining and executing the Fugitive Slave Law, and thereby strengthening the hands of Slavery.—Now, if this is the way to save the union, we think it is high time to inquire what sort of a union it is that can be thus saved, and what sort of danger it is that can be thus averted. We would preach no doctrine that contemplates the dissolution of our union—we would utter no single word in disparagement of it. We subscribe heartily to the sentiment of the framers of the constitution, in the preamble to that venera-

ble instrument, in which they declared its design to be "to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity." We believe the constitution to be, on the whole, wisely adapted to secure these ends. Taking it as it is, and by a fair interpretation, we have no disposition to refuse obedience to it. We might, indeed, most heartily wish that the clause relating to fugitives from service or labor were not there. It is our firm belief that the only system of servitude that ought to be looked upon with the least tolerance in our country, and the only system recognized in the Old Testament, is one from which its subjects would have no desire and no motive to escape. As we read the Old Testament, such is the character of the servitude therein recognized. We understand that the returning of a fugitive servant unwillingly to his master is there forbidden; and that the very fact of his having escaped is taken as evidence of such ill treatment on the part of the master as released the servant from the obligation of remaining, if he chose to escape. And so we say now; if southern masters wish to retain their servants, and have them obedient to the precepts of Paul, let *them* also regard what is directed to themselves; let them forbear threatening, and give to their servants that which is just and equal, and then we should need no Fugitive Slave Law. And were it to be presumed that they who escape were treated as they should be, and had no good reasons for flight, none could reasonably object to the clause in the constitution which requires that they shall be delivered up. But when a construction is put upon that clause which makes it my duty, if called upon, to assist in hunting and recapturing a fugitive—which makes it a crime for me to extend to him the common hospitalities of society, to receive him to my house, and to give him food and shelter—a construction which puts the liberty of every colored person at the North at the mercy of perjured and desperate villains, with no hope of redress by law—a construction which makes every such person presumptively a slave, unless, in a southern court, and before a pro-slavery jury, he can establish his freedom—when we, citizens of the free states, are asked to accept all this as invested with the sacredness of law, the answer that I, for one, have to make, is, that, though I accept the constitution, I utterly repudiate such construction of it. And if you ask me for a reason, I hold it reason enough, though not all that might be given, that there is a Higher Law, a law that is to me more sacred than even the constitution, and infinitely more than the statute for the rendition of fugitives from slavery—a law whose power over the consciences of men that fear God is proof alike against the most ingenious sophistry, and the most unsparing ridicule. That Higher Law is reason enough, why the sober, conscientious and religious men of the free states cannot, and we are confident, never will be made to go one step beyond the letter of the constitution, in anything that will strengthen the defences of slavery.

But then, these are not the men that will dissolve, or in the least de-gree endanger the union. These men will abide by the constitution as it is, or, if they desire its amendment, they will seek it in constitutional modes. They will obey all the laws of the land which they can obey without treason to the Great Power, whose kingdom is over all. If they refuse obedience to any statute, it will be not because their sense of the sacred obligation of law is less, but because it is greater than that of other men. Therefore they cannot obey a statute which in their honest judgment tramples on all that makes law sacred. If the greater part of

the nation were of this mind, the union of these states, we are confident, would stand to the end of the world.

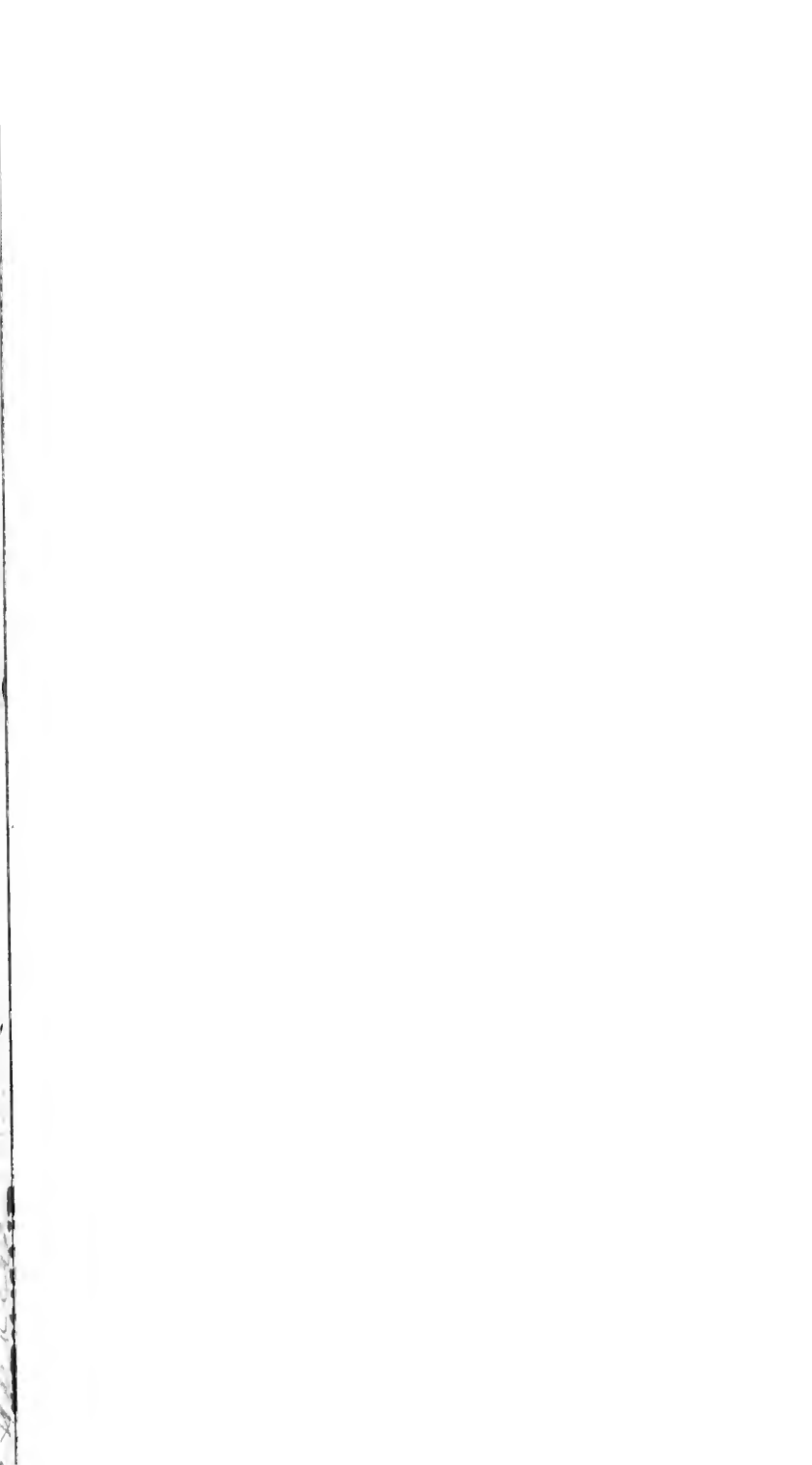
But there are fanatics at the North, and there are fanatics at the South, who have done and are doing their best to weaken and destroy the union. In this thing the extremes have met. Syria is confederate with Ephraim. But those allies prevailed not against Judah: and so the fanatics of both extremes have not destroyed, and we are persuaded, they cannot destroy this union. We have, however, been surprised that their threats and denunciations should have caused the hearts of so many to be moved, as trees are moved by the wind. But we have been more than surprised, we have been grieved beyond measure, that they who have been thus moved, should have been driven by their real or pretended apprehensions of danger to the union, from northern and southern fanaticism, to seek and obtain that alliance with slavery, which gave birth to the Fugitive Slave Law.

We would not, however, convey the impression that we suppose the fear of fanaticism to have been the sole originating cause of that statute. Many who now advocate its thorough execution, on the ground that the safety of the union demands as much, do not mean, we are sure, exactly what they say. In the convention that formed the constitution, when the question of continuing the slave-trade was under discussion, Mr. Rutledge, of South Carolina, said "Religion and humanity have nothing to do with this question. Interest alone is the governing principle with nations." We would hope that this unqualified statement is not true, but certainly we know of no measure of our government with which religion and humanity had less to do than the enacting of the Fugitive Slave Law. And we know not what motive but interest should impel so many men at the North, especially in our cities, to advocate the execution of that law, and even to assist therein. We are all aware that the interests of commercial men at the North are linked by many and strong ties, to southern slavery. And we know equally well that there are very few men who take the same view of a question in which their interests are much concerned, that they would take were there nothing to gain or lose. Inasmuch, then, as the great majority of commercial men do not profess to be governed by any other than the selfish principle, it is not uncharitable nor severe to say of them, that the cry in their mouths, "The union is in danger," meant this, and only this, *our craft is in danger*.

"It is the sad fate of humanity, that, encompassing its hopes, fears, contentment and wishes, within the narrow scope of momentary satisfaction, the great lesson of history is taught almost in vain." Thus, in one of his latest addresses, speaks the great Hungarian. We fear it is too true. We fear that the particular history to which the text relates, its lessons being disregarded, will prove an intimation and a prophecy of our national destiny. Ahaz, in his time of danger, alarmed at that from which the prophet assured him he had nothing to fear, rushed madly upon that which the prophet declared would be his ruin. To relieve for the moment his imaginary fears, he purchased at a great price of treasure from the house of the Lord, that confederacy which opened the way for the overthrow of his kingdom, and the captivity of the whole nation. In our time of trouble and of fear, instead of turning to the Lord for help, and to his law for wisdom, the nation seems not only to have desired, but actually to have entered into a confederacy with the very power of all others from which we have most to fear. We

seem actually to have rushed into the arms of our deadliest enemy.—For if we join hands, and be confederate with slavery, if we clasp it to our bosom, if we inseparably link our destiny with its destiny, what can we expect but that our republic shall share its inevitable fate, and sink with it, at once its partner and its victim !

The points of greatest danger in our political course are not passed as yet. The union is not saved and put beyond peril, by the confederacy of Judah with Assyria. I have not been wont to cherish gloomy foreboding of the probable downfall of our republic. I have believed that there is intelligence, and patriotism, and piety enough in the nation to save it—that there are at least ten righteous men in the city, for whose sake the Lord will not destroy it. But since men have begun to say, Peace and safety—since the claim has been set up that the Fugitive Slave Law has saved the union—since the edict has gone forth commanding men of all parties to unite in obeying, sustaining and enforcing that law, as the only means of continuing the union, which it has saved—since I have witnessed the ready and obsequious acquiescence of the great body of political men in that preposterous demand, I must confess that darker forebodings than I ever yet experienced have filled my mind. In that slight healing of the hurt of my people, I seem to see greater danger than in the hurt itself. While Judah abides by the waters of Shiloah, and trusts in the living God, I have no fears that he will come to harm. But when Judah casts off the law of his God, and becomes confederate with Assyria, then I tremble for him. Then I see him in a peril from which I know not how he will escape.







LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 011 899 000 6